

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. Claim Status and Amendments

Claims 34-44, 46-62 and 67-68 were pending in this application when last examined. Claims 46-62 and 67-68 are withdrawn as non-elected subject matter. Claims 34 and 36-44 have been amended and new claims 69 and 70 have been added.

Amended claim 34 further clarifies the exterior portion of the mold, and further defines the support of the liner. Support for amended claim 34 can be found in the specification, for example, at page 9, line 23, and in Figure 1.

New claims 69-70 are directed to additional embodiments of the mold. Support for new claims 69 and 70 can be found in the specification, for example, at page 9, lines 23-25.

In addition, minor editorial revisions have been made to the claims to better conform to U.S. claim form and patent practice. These revisions are non-substantive and are not intended to narrow the scope of protection.

No new matter has been added.

Claims 34-44, 46-62 and 67-70 are pending upon entry of this amendment.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 USC § 112

At page 2, the Office Action rejects claims 34-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Currently amended claim 34 addresses the issues noted in the Office Action. In particular, amended claim 34 recites that the exterior portion of the mold is permeable to liquid and the interior portion is not permeable to liquid. Amended claim 34 further defines that the support of the liner is made of a material rigid enough to support the liner. Amended claim 34 clearly defines the intended subject matter, and each of claims 34-44 satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 USC § 102

At page 3, the Office Action rejects claims 34, 35, 37-39, 42 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by WAGNER (DE 10130186). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Amended claim 34 is directed to a mold that includes in part, an interior portion comprising a liner and a support of the liner. The support is in contact with the interior face of the liner, and is made of a material rigid enough to support the liner so as to prevent the slurry from causing the

liner to collapse before the slurry has set. WAGNER fails to teach or suggest such a mold.

WAGNER describes a device used for pressure slip casting. WAGNER, however, fails to teach or suggest a mold wherein the support is in contact with the interior face of the liner, as required in claim 34. Moreover, WAGNER teaches away from this particular feature.

In contrast to the instantly claimed mold, the tube of the mold (9) in WAGNER is not in contact with the interior face of the balloon (8), (see, Fig. 3). Furthermore, if the balloon were fixed on the external surface of the tube, the pressure inside the balloon would tend to detach the balloon from the tube. Very secure means of fixing the balloon to the surface of the tube would therefore be necessary to make sure that such a detachment would not occur. WAGNER does not teach or suggest fixing the balloon to the tube in this manner.

In addition, amended claim 34 also recites that the support is made of a material rigid enough to support the liner so as to prevent the slurry from causing the liner to collapse before the slurry has set. WAGNER fails to teach or suggest this feature. In WAGNER, the tube does not hold or support the balloon so as to prevent the collapsing.

Finally, in the region where the balloon is fixed with the tube, the rigidity of the tube makes the expansion of the balloon impossible. In other words, the rigidity of the

tube prevents the functioning of the balloon in this region. WAGNER thus teaches one of ordinary skill in the art to find a way of making the tube more flexible and teaches away from a mold where the support is "rigid enough to support the liner so as to prevent the slurry from causing the liner to collapse ..." as recited in currently amended claim 34.

For all of these reasons, WAGNER fails to teach or suggest, and fails to anticipate, a mold having the combination of all of the features recited in currently amended claim 34. Each of the remaining rejected claims, 35, 37-39, 42 and 44, depends from claim 34, and for at least these same reasons, would also have not been anticipated. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

III. CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 USC § 103

At page 4, the Office Action rejects claims 36, 40, 41 and 43 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over WAGNER. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Each of claims 36, 40, 41 and 43 depends from independent claim 34. As stated in the remarks above, WAGNER fails to teach or suggest the mold according to claim 34. Thus, for at least these same reasons, WAGNER also fails to teach or suggest, and would not have rendered obvious, claims

36, 40, 41 and 43. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

IV. CONCLUSION

Having addressed all the outstanding issues, the amendment is believed to be fully responsive. Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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